

CITY OF ABERDEEN
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
MINUTES

Wednesday, November 9, 2011

A meeting of the Aberdeen Planning Commission was called to order at 7:00 p.m., November 9, 2011, in the Council Chambers by Chairman Swisher.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Joe Swisher, Commissioners Bill Braerman, Karen Heavey, Lance Hersh, and Mark Schlottman.

OTHERS PRESENT: Councilwoman Ruth Ann Young, acting City Council liaison
Phyllis Grover, Director of Planning & Community Development
Matt Lapinsky, Public Works Director
Lt. Kirk Bane, Aberdeen Police Department
Gil Jones, Recording Secretary

The minutes of the October 12, 2011, meeting were approved.

AGENDA ITEMS:

1. Review of Chapter 470, Streets and Sidewalks - Update

Mrs. Grover distributed a memo recounting the meeting on October 28 with City staff, Commissioner Kosko, Harford County staff, and members of the development and engineering community to discuss proposed changes to Chapter 470. This meeting spoke in large part to the Harford County Road Code (HCRC), which the City has also adopted with amendments, and how the HCRC is closely connected to and references the Harford County Transportation Element. It was noted that the HCRC allows for administrative flexibility by the County Public Works staff in terms of dealing with items (such as topography and stormwater management) in proposed site plans or subdivision plans that deviate from the Road Code and to make changes accordingly. Mrs. Grover and Commissioner Kosko felt this meeting revealed a need by the Commission to look at all interrelated items – our Transportation Element, the Road code, and our subdivision regulations – and develop some consistency between them. They also recommended changes to our Transportation Element where Mrs. Grover and Commissioner Kosko found some errors and things that were left out of the original Element, references to the HCRC, and charts that could be deleted. The overall recommendation from Mrs. Grover and Commissioner Kosko is that Chapter 470 doesn't need to be in the City's Code, just a revision of the Subdivision Regulations as they address road widths, in conjunction with those found in the HCRC. Mrs. Grover asked the Planning Commission to review the items pointed up in the memo and discuss them at the December meeting, or call a special meeting. In summary, read the memo, refer to the Transportation Element and compare, then repeal the existing Chapter 470.

Mr. Swisher suggested sitting around a table to discuss this issue, not necessarily at an official meeting, more of an informal discussion. Mr. Swisher will get with Mrs. Grover and schedule a meeting following Thanksgiving.

Mr. Lapinsky indicated that per Jeff Stratmeyer of Harford County, the HCRC is due for an update shortly. Mr. Lapinsky will look at elements of the current HCRC and pull things out that may be exceptions due to environmental or sustainability issues for example. He also indicated the meeting group was happy to help and is willing to work with the City on this issue.

2. Update on 2011 Comprehensive Zoning Review Process and Timeline

Mrs. Grover reviewed the form and the ad to be placed in The Aegis and The Record running for the next six weeks. Applications for rezoning may be submitted from Tuesday November 15, 2011, through Friday, December 16, 2011, to be postmarked no later than December 16. The intent is to have these items on the Planning Commission's January agenda.

Mr. Swisher asked if the Zoning Map will be changed. Mrs. Grover said if changes in zoning take place, then the Zoning Map will also need to be updated.

Mrs. Heavey asked if the Commission would be voting on the changes the night of the January meeting and what format would be provided showing the changes. Mrs. Grover said they would not, that any proposed changes would be presented at the January meeting, with a public hearing in February. All of the proposed changes will be presented on an Excel spreadsheet for the Commission's consideration.

There being no further business or public comment, the meeting was adjourned at 7:17 p.m.

Planning Commission Chairman

Recording Secretary

Date of Approval